

*Peace the End of the perfect and upright Man.*

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A  
S E R M O N,  
OCCASIONED BY THE  
D E A T H  
OF THE REVEREND  
Mr. WILLIAM FORD,  
WHO DEPARTED THIS LIFE JAN. 26, 1783,  
IN THE FORTY-SEVENTH YEAR OF HIS AGE.  
PREACHED AT MILES-LANE, FEB. 2, 1783.  
By STEPHEN ADDINGTON.  
TO WHICH IS ADDED THE  
O R A T I O N  
AT HIS  
I N T E R M E N T.  
By JOSEPH BARBER.

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W. Musgrave.



PSALM XXXVII. 37.

*Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright ; for the end of that man is peace.*

**M**ANY of us have long believed this truth, and some of us have lately seen it pleasingly verified. And if the end be peace, shall it not reconcile to the trials of the way ? The sufferings which the excellent of the earth often endure, together with the frequent prosperity of such as fear not God, have been stumbling-blocks to many. They appear to have hurt Asaph, the inspired Penman of the lxxiiiid. Psalm, to a very great degree. He was long discouraged and astonished at the sight ; nor could he be at all reconciled to events, that seemed to him so inconsistent with the justice

as well as the goodness of God, till in the Sanctuary he understood their end. The end of both is strongly marked there, and in the Psalm before us. But we are now called more immediately to realize that of his faithful servants. May the Lord so bless our meditations upon the subject, and the event which has directed them to it, as to render his word and providences useful preparatives for our end, that we may finish our course in like manner.

The purport of the passage before us is too obvious to need a critical examination, either of its parts or context, in order to render it intelligible. You all understand it, and must see enough in it to furnish abundant matter of seasonable instruction and comfort on the present occasion.

I. It gives the outlines of a very great and amiable character, "perfect and upright."

II. Suggests a useful warning, even to such, of their latter end.

III. Describes it emphatically in one word, "Peace." And

IV. It



IV. It bespeaks the close and serious attention of every one to the good man's character and end. "Mark the perfect man, &c."

I. Let us observe the terms in which the Psalmist speaks of that man to whom he here calls our attention. "Perfect and upright."—We cannot wonder to hear of an upright man; one without allowed guile. We see many of whom we have every reason to believe that they are so; professed followers of Jesus, and truly what they profess to be.—But we may look long enough among mankind, either in the present day or through all the past ages of the church, before we can behold a man compleatly and absolutely perfect. David knew life and human nature better than to suppose any capable of such perfection. Job before him declared of himself,\* "If I should say I am perfect, my mouth would therein prove me perverse:" and Solomon after him, "There is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good and sinneth not. Who

\* Job ix. 20.

“ can say I have made my heart clean ? I  
 “ am pure from my sins ? ” \* There are  
 that boast of perfection, who, perhaps, are  
 farthest from it : and, on the other hand, I  
 trust there are who talk the least of it, that  
 are if any on earth may be called so, perfect  
 men. Indeed, every creature which God  
 originally made was, according to its nature  
 and end, perfect. And Man was distin-  
 guished from all other beings upon Earth by  
 the extent and excellence of his powers ; of  
 which nothing greater could have been said  
 than is said by the sacred Historian, when  
 he informs us, that “ God created man in  
 “ his own image, in the image of God cre-  
 “ ated he him.” † But man fell from his  
 primitive dignity and bliss, and entailed a  
 corrupt nature and a curse, by Sin, upon all  
 his seed. Nevertheless divine grace has,  
 through all ages, been extricating some of  
 his apostate race from the ruins of the fall,  
 by restoring them at once to the lost favour  
 and impaired image of their God. The  
 former part of this plan is fulfilled in their  
 justification, by the perfect righteousness of

\* Ecclef. vii. 20. Prov. xx. 9.

† Gen. i. 27.

the glorious Emanuel, imputed to them upon their believing : and I trust I may say to some of you as Paul said to the Christians at Colosse, \* “ Ye are compleat in him who  
 “ is the Head of all principalities and powers.” Our dear deceased Brother frequently expressed his joy and confidence in this provision of mercy, in the words of Dr. Watts,  
 HYMNS, B. I. 20.

“ Awake my heart, arise my tongue,

“ Prepare a tuneful voice ;

“ In God, the life of all my joys,

“ Aloud will I rejoice.

“ 'Tis He adorn'd my naked soul,

“ And made salvation mine ;

“ Upon a poor polluted worm

“ He makes his graces shine.

“ And left the shadow of a spot

“ Should on my soul be found,

“ He took the robe the Saviour wrought,

“ And cast it all around.”

And I hope I shall not seem unmindful of his repeated injunctions to forbear enlarging

\* Col. ii. 10.

on his character, if I add, that grace adorned him likewise with the other characteristic of perfection celebrated in a following stanza of the above Hymn :

“ The spirit wrought my faith and love,  
“ And hope and ev’ry grace.”

Thus does he beautify the meek with salvation ; and thus arrayed is the Man of God, honourably and eminently perfect. And this, as opposed to the Hypocrite and the Sinner, David seems more immediately to have referred to, when he said in the words before us, “ Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright ;” the man whose perfection, though conspicuous enough to be observed with admiration, is no deceitful cover, or mere superficial gilding, but an inward reality ; and the genuine, consistent effect of a principle which dictates an habitual respect unto all God’s commandments.

This is the amiable object, the exalted character recommended to your serious attentive regard in our text. Not the man the world calls great — not the mighty  
2 Prince



Prince—the able Statesman—the enterprising Hero—or the profound Philosopher—but the truly good Man, the Noah,\* the Job,† the Abraham‡ of his day, the living transcript of his divine Master, and genuine offspring of his Father in heaven, who is perfect. § Behold him living from him, living upon him, living to him, a life of faith in an invisible God and Redeemer; and a life of love and devotedness to him both in public and in private; invariably faithful in his adherence to his revealed will; zealous in his attachment to his cause; contending earnestly for the faith once delivered to the Saints; but with a spirit of meekness, and a constant disposition to hold the truth in love; affectionate in his good wishes and prayers, and active in his services to promote the temporal and eternal welfare of all around him. Conscious of imperfection in himself, ever candid towards his brethren; and before God, as an unprofitable servant, humbly looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus

\* Gen. vi. 9.

† Gen. xvii. 1.

‡ Job i. 1.

§ Mat. v. 48.

Christ unto eternal life ; modest in every intercourse with his fellow-creatures, and assiduous to please and serve ; amiably tender and benevolent ; unwearied in his application of every talent for usefulness, and endearingly courteous and affectionate in every relation and character. Such a man you must behold with pleasure in every station and office. He is an ornament and a blessing to the world, and to the Church of God. For the sake of both, when or where-ever we observe him, we may say with Dr. Watts of an eminent cotemporary,

——“ Eternal God, command his stay ;  
“ O we could wish his age were one immortal day.”

But we are called,

II. To realize his end, not the utter extinction of his being, no ; in that sense

“ The man’s immortal, he can never die.”

He will know no end either of his existence, or of his bliss. Yet to all he is, and has, and does below, there must be an end.

This

This one event happeneth unto all ; to the wise and to the righteous, as well as to the sinner. But shall it be said again, that the righteous in this sense perisheth, and no man layeth it to heart ? The event is too solemn and too interesting to be overlooked. Let us make a serious pause, and turn aside to see this sight, the end of the righteous. Though it wound, it may profit us, if the observation be just, " That it is better to go to the house of mourning, than to the house of feasting." Your Fellow-Pilgrim awhile ago was struggling with the difficulties of the way. He has now got safe to his journey's end. You saw him just on Jordan's shores ; willing, wishing, longing to shoot the gulph—you beheld his end—farther your eye could not follow him ; or if it fixed awhile on his deserted remains — those eyes now closed — the late beating pulse stands still — the last breath expired — the countenance fallen — the vital heat fled — those hands and feet, so used to exertion in the offices of beneficence, move no more — that tongue, lately employed in the expressions of piety and love, now silenced. — Awful

end! A final period, at least here, to every interview of friendship, to every exercise of social devotion, and to every service for God and his fellow-creatures. His instructions, cautions, counsels, consolations, prayers, all ended. The place that once knew him, that lately knew him, that knew him often and intimately, now knows him no more. All he was doing or thinking to do in the house of God, or in his own, for the Redeemer's interest, and to extend his happiness and usefulness in his several connections here, at an end. Painful thought! but we do not, we will not, forrow, either as without hope, or without consolation: we cannot, while we have to review

III. What such a man's end is, viz. peace: not only peaceful, but peace itself. This may be intended as a representation both of his state on this side, and beyond the grave.\*

\* I take no notice of the reference some have supposed herein to his posterity, because it seems to me as foreign to the Psalmist's meaning, as it is to the event which has now directed us to the subject.

1.) This



1.) This is often true of the last days of the upright upon earth. They may not be altogether what Job's were, "a scene of outward tranquillity and opulence," as described in chap. xlii. 10. 12. In the prospect of which some think he uttered those words when sore chastened, "All the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come."\* Few of the people of God may have reason to expect such a change; nor would it perhaps to many be desirable. But the blessing spoken of in our text is of importance to all. Peace is valuable at all times, and in every connection: peace in nations and neighbourhoods, in churches and in families: above all, "the peace of God which passeth all understanding, keeping the heart and mind through Christ Jesus."† This is a privilege peculiar to the Saints, but common to every one of the household of faith,

2.) Peace with God, as his God and Father in Christ. "There is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, who

\* Job. xiv. 14.

† Phil. iv. 7.

" walk

“ walk not after the flesh, but after the  
 “ spirit.” \* The true believer, as such, is  
 delivered from the guilt of sin, and being  
 justified by faith, has peace with God  
 through Jesus Christ our Lord. † A blef-  
 sing ever precious to him, and peculi-  
 arly so in his last moments, when en-  
 abled to entertain a good hope through  
 grace, that he is thus accepted in the Be-  
 loved ; that God is reconciled to him, and  
 he is reconciled to God ; when he feels his  
 former enmity subdued, all opposition slain,  
 and a sweet harmony and intercourse estab-  
 lished between God and his soul ; when  
 believing views of redeeming love, and the  
 exceeding riches of divine grace as dis-  
 played in the constitution of the everlasting  
 covenant, and the person and undertaking  
 of its glorious Mediator, dispel his fears,  
 revive his hopes, and brighten his prof-  
 pects ; when the Spirit of adoption is  
 sweetly witnessing with his spirit, that he  
 is a child of God, and drawing forth at the  
 same time every working of filial affection  
 and confidence in the heart ; then has he all

\* Rom. viii. 1.

† Rom. v. 1.

peace

peace and joy in believing, as “ no more a  
 “ stranger and foreigner, but a fellow-  
 “ citizen with the Saints, and of the house-  
 “ hold of God.” \* Added to this, he has

3.) Peace in a review of past engagements with the Lord, and for him. David spake of this source of consolation ; and the faithful followers of Jesus have often felt it in their last moments. All have much to be humbled for ; great defects, and many imperfections ; such are not, cannot be unacquainted with them : nor has any man ever had whereof to glory before God—yet it has afforded one and another of his servants no small satisfaction, in the near views of eternity, to look back upon past seasons of holy and enlarged intercourse with God, and devotedness to him. Such as have been not only kept from the pollutions that are in the world through lust, but were early taught to seek the Lord, and to serve him “ with a perfect heart, “ and with a willing mind,” cannot but bless him for it then. Those who, after

\* Eph. ii. 19.

running obstinately and long into all excesses of riot, have been enlightened and reclaimed, must on their dying pillows celebrate such exertions of the power, and displays of the grace of God ; and speak of themselves with wonder and gratitude, as brands plucked out of the burning : they will bless him then, both for all he has done for them, and for all he has inclined and enabled them to do for him : they have found Wisdom's ways, ways of pleasantness, and her paths, paths of peace ; and a review of the hours they have spent in them is truly satisfactory, when near their journey's end. " The work of righteousness shall be peace, and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance for ever." \* The pleasant moments they have spent in pouring out their hearts in secret into their Father's bosom ; those in which they have sat under his shadow, in the Sanctuary, with great delight, and found his fruit sweet unto their taste ; every sacramental transaction, especially in which the believer has said at his table, with a joy

\* Isa. xxxii. 17.



unknown but to the soul experiencing it, "I am my Lord's and he is mine." These seasons and engagements, as evidences of grace and earnestness of future favour, may, and I don't doubt but they often do, afford solid comfort in the review to the children of God, when confined from them, and incapable of renewing them. From among other testimonies to this purpose, I will now only select that of the apostle Paul, uttered by him at the close of life: "I am ready  
 " to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand; I have fought a good  
 " fight, I have finished my course, I have  
 " kept the faith: henceforth there is laid  
 " up for me a crown of righteousness,  
 " &c." \*—Moreover, such a soul has

4.) Peace in the expectation of a removal. He can leave the world without reluctance; has no such attachment to it, no interests so dear to him in it as to make him wish, or even willing to live here for ever. When the children of this world are called away, they leave their portion, their all behind;

\* 2 Tim. iv. 6. 8.

no wonder, therefore, if they cleave to it, and shrinking back from the borders of eternity, say in agonies "we cannot go." I have heard of a rich sinner, that cried out upon his dying pillow, "I will not die, I will not die," and repeated it till he expired in unutterable agonies. But, mark the perfect man, and behold the upright, for the end of that man is peace. When the great Lord of life and death says, "behold I come quickly," we often hear such an one reply, "Amen, even so come Lord Jesus." If he is ever in a straight, it is not that of a mind suspended between heaven and earth, at a loss which to prefer; but that of Paul,\* viz. "Whether to abide in the flesh for the service of Christ and his church below, or to depart in order to enjoy and glorify him above." Or if he is affected by the thought of a dissolution of present tender and endearing connections; when he realizes the hand in which his times are, and in which he leaves all that are dearest to him, he can leave them with composure, and a joy heightened

\* Phil. i. 23.

by the prospect of meeting them again in a better world, to part no more.

This introduces our next observation, viz.

5.) He has peace in the prospect of an hereafter. This has indeed frequently rendered the latter end of such more than peace; it has administered rich consolation, and joy unspeakable, to many of the dear children of God in their last moments: not merely convinced without a doubt of the certainty and reality of a future state, but led into pleasing meditations on the delightful and exalted descriptions of the inheritance of the Saints contained in the word of God, and animated by a good hope through grace of a mansion there; we hear one and another often crying out, “O for the wings of a dove, then would I flee away and be at rest.”

“We know that when this earthly house of our tabernacle is dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens; for in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from hea-

“ ven ; not that we would be unclothed,  
 “ but clothed upon, that mortality may be  
 “ swallowed up of life : and we are confi-  
 “ dent and willing rather to be absent from  
 “ the body and present with the Lord.” \*

This hope of the immediate happiness of the separate spirit, on its departure from the body, has proved an anchor to many souls tossed to and fro, especially when they have got near port, on their passage to the Land of Promise ; having to add, “ When Christ,  
 “ who is our life, shall appear, then shall  
 “ we also appear with him in glory : when  
 “ he shall descend with a shout, with the  
 “ voice of the archangel and the trump of  
 “ God, all the dead in Christ shall be  
 “ raised, and this corruptible put on incor-  
 “ ruption, this mortal put on immortality ;”  
 hear them breaking out in raptures of joy and triumph in the prospect, “ O Death,  
 “ where is thy sting ! O Grave, where is  
 “ thy victory ! thanks be to God who  
 “ giveth us the victory, through Jesus  
 “ Christ our Lord.”

Permit me only to add on this part of

\* 2 Cor. v. 1. 8.



our subject, that whatever solid peace these considerations administer to the dying Saint, it is not merely from what there is either in them or in him, but from the enlightening and cheering influences of that holy Spirit which Jesus promised as the comforter to his Disciples: that Spirit at once enlightens the object of his faith, strengthens and enlarges the faculties of the soul for comprehending it; and as “ the Spirit of adoption witnessing with his Spirit, enables him to cry Abba Father ”\* This holy Spirit shines upon his own work in the soul, and thus discovers to it at once its evidences for heaven, and somewhat of a meetness for it. This points out Jesus to him as both his head and surety, his intercessor before the throne, and his fore-runner thither; and then he says, as one of his waiting servants did with Jesus in his arms, “ Now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation.”†

Thus have the faithful in Christ Jesus frequently peace in their last moments upon earth. But this is not equally lively or

\* Rom. viii. 17.

† Luke ii 29.

lasting

lasting to them all. The Lord may have his wise and gracious ends to answer in trying the faith and patience, meekness and long-suffering of some; nor are severe sufferings or dark frames, though continued to the end of their pilgrimage, at all inconsistent with their future safety or present interest in the tenderest compassions of their God and Redeemer. For whatever in these respects may be the loss of his people here — we may add with certainty

(1.) Compleat, uninterrupted, and everlasting peace awaits them all on their departure; and that in consequence of being thereupon delivered from every evil, from every natural evil. Truly may it be said of that abode of his servants, “there the  
 “wicked cease from troubling them, and  
 “the weary are at rest.” \* — no more sickness or languishing there — not a moment’s pain or ach in any part there. No more fatigue, no more distress; sorrow and sighing are fled away.—Nor is there, says a pious writer, such a thing as a pale face—a languid body — feeble joints — unable in-

\* Job ii. 17.

fancy — decrepid age — peccant humour — distorted or disjointed limbs — pining sickness — griping fears — consuming cares — nor any thing whatsoever that deserves the name of evil. — There is no more death to separate them from their friends, or their friends from them. A gracious God, a tender Father, from every eye has wip'd off every tear. Whatever may have been the occasions of pain and disquietude to the Saints while in the body and the present state, either from within or without, are unknown there. Nothing shall destroy or hurt in all that holy mountain; for salvation itself has God appointed for walls and for bulwarks. Blessed then are the dead that die in the Lord, for, from thenceforth (*viz.* the moment of their departure) they rest from their labours, Rev. xiv. 13. Similar to this, and much to our present purpose is that declaration of God concerning the righteous in the Old Testament, “He  
 “ shall enter into peace, they shall rest in  
 “ their beds, even every one who has  
 “ been walking in his uprightness.” \* Nor

\* Isa. lvii. 2.

shall



shall this their peace be disturbed by any moral or spiritual evil ; for there shall in no wise enter into the gates of the heavenly Jerusalem any thing that defileth, that worketh an abomination, or that maketh a lie : not one unholy soul shall intrude there, nor a single emotion be excited in any inhabitant, to disturb his repose for ever ; every alarming and subtle foe is kept at a perpetual and inaccessible distance ; every inlet to temptation removed, every tendency to every sin subdued. They complain no more of an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God. Their dark, cold, and dead seasons are for ever at an end. In a word, “ their Sun shall no more go down, nor “ their Moon withdraw itself, for the Lord “ is their everlasting light, and the days of “ their mourning are for ever ended.” \*

This leads to our last remark for the illustration of the truth before us, viz.

(2.) He will be admitted then to the perpetual enjoyment of every good. Here a large field of delightful contemplation opens upon us, which we must for the present but

\* Isa. lx. 20.



just look into. Behold the man of God dismissed from his mean tottering tenement of clay, and admitted into a glorions mansion in his house, not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. Methinks, I see him looking around with joy unspeakable and full of glory on the amiable exalted company with which he finds himself surrounded there: Angels, Archangels, Cherubim and Seraphim; Spirits of just men made perfect, from among the Patriarchs and Prophets; the glorious company of Martyrs, “ who came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and “ made them white in the blood of the Lamb;” even all that have followed him in all ages and countries; among them here and there a former fellow-pilgrim, a beloved friend in Christ, another self.—O rapturous interview! Above all observe his eye fixed on his beloved, and longed-for — his Redeemer and his God. See him pressing to the Throne, to pour out all his soul in hymns of gratitude and praise to him that, having washed him from his sins in his own blood, has conducted him safe to  
D glory.

glory. And to what honours is he advanced — what exalted powers does he possess — what sublime pleasures does he enjoy ! — But when we have said all we can of the happiness of heaven, we must conclude, “ Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, “ neither have entered into the heart of “ man the things which God hath prepared “ for them that love him.” \* Permit me therefore now to proceed :

IV. To remind you of the attention which we ought to pay to the important character, and to the delightful end which the Text specifies. This will naturally lead to the proper application and improvement of the subject. Mark it and him — fix the eye steadfastly upon both, and remember their connection. Some of you may have many other objects that seem to call for your attention. And I fear some of you, that have comparatively little else of moment to employ your thoughts, have been too inattentive to this. But if you have remarked it before, the Word and Pro-

\* 1 Cor. ii. 9.

vidence of God concur to call your serious attention to it again.

1.) Mark it, all of you, in order to form a right judgment of yourselves. You must surely think it desirable, and acknowledge it of importance to know what your real character is, and to what an end you are tending; whether among the righteous, whose end is peace, or among those whose end is destruction. If you desire solid satisfaction, “examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves, to know whether Jesus Christ is in you, or, whether ye are reprobates.” \* Bring heart and life to the touchstone of the Word of God; making it at the same time your earnest request to the Lord, that he would enable you to think of yourselves as you ought to think, and teach you to know your end. There are but two characters in the sight of God; which of them is mine? two ends; which is mine like to be? If I may hope, I would wish for the support and consolation of it; but let me not de-

\* 2 Cor. xiii. 5.

ceive myself, while the truth is not in me,  
 “ What is the hope of the hypocrite, when  
 God taketh away his soul ? ” \*

2.) Mark it, Sinners and Hypocrites in Sion, for your admonition and caution. The spirit and conversation of a perfect and upright man is a daily and hourly reproof to you ; and may you not see in his end a contrast of what yours is like to be ? The Psalmist says in our context, (v. 23.) the steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord, and he delighteth in his way ; and (v. 31.) the law of his God is in his heart. He had also said before, (v. 11.) the meek shall delight themselves in abundance of peace. But there is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked : so far from peace, the inspired Penman assures us repeatedly in this Psalm, that they shall be cut off and perish ; yea every transgressor shall be cut off. Knowledge, profession, privileges, connections and gifts, may flatter the formal hypocrite in life, but they will do nothing to secure him a peaceful end. — If consci-

\* Job xxvii. 8.



ence be not dreadfully hardened, it will do its office then. — Reflections on what is past — forebodings of a righteous and heart-scrutinizing tribunal, with all its eternally fearful and dreadful consequences — with what agony do they often force themselves in upon the self-deceiver in his last moments! fill him with tossings to and fro on his dying bed, and begin a hell within him, even before he is consigned over to outer darkness. This, perhaps, some of you will think is giving a pleasing subject a very gloomy turn. But we must be faithful in declaring the whole counsel of God: and I now suggest the warning under the impression of a charge once brought by God himself against persons who professed to speak in his name, \* “ They have healed the hurt of  
 “ the daughter of my people slightly, saying  
 “ peace, peace, when there is no peace.”  
 I cannot, I dare not speak it to all. “ There is no peace, faith my God, to the wicked.” Such have little reason to expect it in the the midst of their days, and much less at the end of them. That is a blessing pecu-

\* Jer. vi. 14.

liar to the perfect and upright man: no other man shall enjoy it; indeed no other can. Hear then, I beseech you, and fear; those of you especially who have had frequent opportunities of observing the spirit and walk of such: you will be of all others most inexcusable, and of all most miserable; the recollection of what you have seen in them, and heard from them, will render you so; and the sight or thought of their happiness, add to the pungency of your woe. My father or my mother, my husband or my wife, my brother, my child, my friend, my minister in the kingdom of heaven, and I myself shut out! He or she in peace, in joy, in glory there, and I tormented in these flames! But I forbear enlarging — remark the good man's character and end, and take warning — which is what I would urge farther,

3.) Mark his character to imitate it, all of you that desire his end. — You have heard often of Balaam's wish, \* and perhaps this subject may have put some of you upon

\* Numb. xxiii. 10.

adopting

adopting it. “ Let me die the death of  
 “ the righteous, and let my latter end be  
 “ like his.” But have not you been often  
 told ; yea, are not you convinced, that if  
 your life be not like his, your death will  
 not, cannot be so ? It is said of our divine  
 Lord, that he set us an example, that we  
 should follow his steps. Let us improve  
 that of one and another of his servants to  
 the same purpose, and, while we admire,  
 imitate them in all things in which the  
 same mind appeared in them that was in  
 Christ Jesus their Lord and ours. To this  
 we are frequently exhorted in the word of  
 God ; and that charge is now solemnly en-  
 forced upon us both by the present subject  
 and the Providence which has directed us to  
 it ; \* “ Be not slothful, but followers of  
 “ them who through faith and patience in-  
 “ herit the promises.” I add,

4.) Let those who walk in their steps  
 chearfully hope for their end. I will not  
 say they are necessarily in all respects con-  
 nected. There may be here and there an

\* Heb. vi. 12.

instance in which the sun of a good man sets in a cloud ; but I would hope there are many more, who, after a cloudy day, find that in the eventide there is light. Fear subsides, faith is strengthened, and their prospects brighten as they get nearer the Land of Vision. Not a few who, at a distance have dreaded the agonies and consequences of death, have found sweet peace at the approach thereof ; and some, who have apprehended their spirits must then be overwhelmed within them, have been enabled to adopt the language of Paul's holy triumph in their very conflict with the King of Terrors, " O Death, where is thy sting ! O " Grave, where is thy victory ! the sting of " Death is Sin, and the strength of Sin is " the Law ; but thanks be to God, who " giveth us the Victory, through Jesus " Christ our Lord." \* But know all ye that have committed your souls into the hands of Jesus, and who are formed to the true spirit of his followers, that neither the certainty nor degree of your happiness and glory beyond the grave depends on the mea-

\* 1 Cor. xv. 55, 56, 57.



sure of your joy, either in your living or dying moments. There remaineth a rest for all the people of God; and multitudes, I doubt not, are triumphing in full possession of it, great part of whose life on earth was spent with grief, and their years with fighting. If the vision tarry, wait for it, ye that fear the Lord and hope in his mercy; for though the vision tarry, it is for an appointed time, and at the end thereof it will surely speak; it will not tarry any longer." \* I will only add one exhortion more, viz.

5.) Mark this character and end with peculiar attention and thankfulness, in those with whom you have been nearly connected. As I am restrained from enlarging on the character of my dear deceased Brother, by his own express and repeated injunctions, you will not expect it. I hope the opportunities which many of you have had of beholding a striking and instructive illustration of our text in his life and death, have not been, will not be lost upon you. Let me address those of you who were here under his ministerial and pastoral care, in

\* Hab. ii. 3.

the words of the apostle Paul to the Hebrews, (ch. xiii. v. 7.) “ Remember him  
 “ that hath had the rule over you, and hath  
 “ spoken unto you the word of God—  
 “ whose faith follow,” (and, I will add, whose spirit and walk follow) “ considering  
 “ the end of his conversation.”—“ And let  
 “ me beseech you, brethren, for the Lord  
 “ Jesus Christ’s sake, and for the love of  
 “ the Spirit, that you strive together with  
 “ me in your prayers to God for me ;” that the call which this early removal of a truly amiable and faithful Brother, so loudly and immediately speaks to me as his Successor among you, may quicken my best endeavours to work the work of him that hath sent me while it is day.— And now, my dear friends, what shall I say to you with whom the deceased was long and intimately connected? I know you feel your loss; but I hope you find likewise the very considerations that aggravate it, adapted, in some views, to afford you consolation. I most sincerely wish and pray, that you may long be upheld and relieved by them, and in like circumstances by a good hope through Grace for yourselves; for which purpose,

suffer the word of exhortation, and be entreated to take heed that no salutary impressions be lost, which such a life and such an end may have excited. By both, though now dead, he is yet speaking more immediately to you; speaking to you again, and with encreased solemnity and affection, in a language similar to that of the many addresses of tender and faithful friendship, in which he has repeatedly opened the fulness of his heart to you here in the house of God, in your houses, and in his own. May all prove to you a favour of life unto life! This, I am persuaded, was his heart's desire for every one with whom he was connected. But I know he felt for you, his young friends, living and dying, as with the heart of a parent: permit me, therefore, to hope, that you will consider me now as uttering the language of his soul, and of my own, while, for a few moments, I recall your attention to the truth in our text. After seeing you have now likewise heard somewhat of the way and of the end of a truly good man — mark both — behold both with the attention and seriousness both deserve: observe wherein each consists, and from

whence both proceed ; and observe, not merely or chiefly for your information with respect to another, but to instruct and animate you in matters most nearly interesting to yourselves.

As imperfect guilty creatures, seek complete justification through the perfect righteousness of the great Redeemer — rising up into a world of snares and enemies implore his constant protection — if conscious that you lack wisdom, ask it of the Lord ; and as you wish to pass honourably and usefully through life in the duties of every situation, intreat daily a fulfilment of that declaration of mercy which he made to his beloved Paul, “ My grace is sufficient for thee ; my strength is made perfect in weakness.” Shun the company, as you would avoid the character and the end of the ungodly ; and, on the other hand, in order to secure opportunities of beholding and marking the upright and excellent of the earth, and that you may be excited to an honourable ambition of imitating them, seek their company and friendship. Above all, mark him who has, in every thing, set you an example that you should follow his steps ;  
him



him who in all he said and did, and in every thought of his heart, was uniformly and absolutely perfect. Yes, my dear young friends, while others are following divers lusts and pleasures, be ye followers of Jesus; nor suffer those who are strangers to him and his ways to prejudice you against them as either unprofitable or gloomy: you have heard often from the dead; and there are those among the living, whose testimony deserves credit, that can join in assuring you “his ways are ways of pleasantness; and all his paths, paths of peace.” You will find them more and more so, the longer and more steadily you walk in them: the review of such a course will afford you the most solid satisfaction in your last moments, and know that it leads to the regions of uninterrupted peace and everlasting joy. Permit me, therefore, to leave with you, and all present, that weighty exhortation of the apostle Peter, (2 Ep. ch. iii. v. 11.) “Be diligent, that ye may be found of God in peace without spot, and blameless.” Amen.

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*Bar*  
*by*

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THE  
ORATION  
DELIVERED AT THE  
INTERMENT  
OF THE  
Rev<sup>d</sup>. Mr. WILLIAM FORD,  
IN  
BUNHILL-FIELDS,  
FEBRUARY 1, 1783.  
BY JOSEPH BARBER.

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THE BRITISH MUSEUM

NOTATION

DELIVERED AT THE



ROYAL WILLIAM FORD

IN

RENEWED

JOSEPH BARBER

THE BRITISH MUSEUM



THE  
FUNERAL ORATION.

MEN, BRETHREN, and FATHERS,

**I**T is a solemn Providence which has brought us together at this time, viz. the death not only of a fellow-mortal, but of one who was a real Christian, yea, a valuable Minister of Jesus Christ.—What ravages is death making in our world continually! cutting down one and another; persons of all ages, all conditions and characters; high and low, rich and poor, young and old, good and bad. It spares none, but being commissioned by the great God, it never fails to execute its office. But O, what an amazing difference is there between the death of the righteous and the death of the wicked! The Scripture points it out in very expressive language, and in a very striking manner, when it informs us, that “The wicked is driven away in his wickedness, but the righteous hath hope in his death.” *Driven away.* The phrase intimates, with what reluctance he goes; he is quite averse to it, but is forced away; God requiring his soul at his hand. He is *driven away in his wickedness*, as a Malefactor under the displeasure of his Judge; driven

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away

away from all his enjoyments and comforts here upon earth, which his heart was set upon as his supreme good ; and driven away into outer darkness, where there is weeping, wailing, and gnashing of teeth. — How awful is this consideration, for a person to be excluded from the glorious and blissful presence of God, and to be confined in the prison of Hell, there to suffer the vengeance of eternal fire ! The thought is enough to make one tremble. — Sinners are loth to believe that there is a future state of rewards and punishments ; and especially that the punishment of those, who live and die in their sins, will be eternal in its duration : yea, many are so far gone into infidelity, as to persuade themselves that there is no such thing. But the word of God assures us of it ; and, therefore, it is the duty of his ministers to warn sinners of their danger, and to urge them to flee from the wrath to come, and to flee to the Lord Jesus Christ to save them. Knowing the terrors of the Lord, we would fain persuade men ; and think ourselves happy when God persuades any of them by our instrumentality.

But if we turn our thoughts to the death of the Righteous, this is a delightful subject. 'Tis granted, that there is something gloomy and distressing in death itself ; but by the grace of God, it is become a kind friend to his people. It comes as a messenger of peace, to fetch them home to their Father's house : it comes to release  
their

their immortal spirits from the sins and sorrows of the present state, and to introduce them into that presence of God, where there is fulness of joy, and to that right hand where are pleasures for evermore.—And though the bodies of the Saints must be dissolved and go to the grave, yet there they lie as in a bed of rest, till the morning of the resurrection; when they shall be raised by the Spirit of Christ incorruptible and immortal, fashioned like unto his glorious body; and how glorious that is, no mortal can tell.

This is the great hope of the Gospel, the hope of the righteous which they have in their death. Their hope is built upon a solid foundation, viz. upon the Lord Jesus Christ the rock of ages, his atoning blood and everlasting righteousness; and upon that everlasting Covenant of Grace, which has been ratified by his infinitely precious blood.—This hope is not a lifeless, but a lively hope; it has life and vigour in it; it is an heart-purifying hope, and which influences them that possess it to a life of holy obedience and submission to the will of God; for whosoever hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as the Lord is pure; and 'tis the character of all such, that they are walking with God, and living to God.—And this hope is supporting and comforting; it is as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that which is within the vail, whither Jesus the fore-runner is for us entered. It composes and animates the Christian in the

midst of the storms of life, and is of signal use to him in his conflict with death. It makes him easy and happy, when the wicked and ungodly are all confusion and distress. And sometimes it rises up even to a joyful assurance, so that the believer can triumph over death, when he is in the agonies thereof, and his soul is filled with comfort and joy in the midst of the pangs of dissolving nature.

Our dear departed Brother, we are well satisfied, was one of the righteous, and he had this hope, I have been speaking of, in his death; yea, the God of hope filled him with all joy and peace in believing, and he abounded in hope through the power of the Holy-Ghost. — I shall not pretend to give you any large encomium of the deceased, yet cannot satisfy myself without speaking a little of the Grace of God bestowed upon him. He was of a sweet natural temper, which was much improved by Grace. I believe it might be said of him, that he feared the Lord from his youth, and that his attainments in the Divine life were very considerable. *As a Christian*, in my opinion, he had few equals, hardly any superiors. Some of you are witnesses, and God also, how holily, and justly, and unblamably, he behaved himself amongst us. Our Brother was remarkable for his humility: he was one of those humble souls with whom Jehovah delights to dwell. — *As a Minister*, he appeared to be well furnished for his work: and though the Lord did not see fit to



render him so generally acceptable and useful as some others, yet he was greatly esteemed by some who knew his worth. I well remember the last sermon he preached at my place, which was not long after the death of his beloved wife: \* he took for his text these words, " My times are in thy hand." The auditory were apparently much impressed with the sermon; several spoke to me of it afterwards, as what they hoped was blessed to their souls; and, for my part, I never heard a sermon with more pleasure in my life.—It was the will of a sovereign God to visit his servant with a long and distressing illness, which at length carried him off: but he was through the whole, as I am informed, very patient and submissive to the will of Heaven, and very composed and happy in his soul. The fears of death were gone, and with chearful hope he waited, under great languor and pains of body, for his dismissal into that Rest which remaineth for the people of God.—And now he's gone; gone to be with Jesus, which is far better, infinitely better than being here. Now he has gotten the victory, and his soul is triumphing in the salvation of his God. His mortal part we have committed to the earth, but not without a pleasing hope and joyful expectation, that it will have a resurrection to eternal life; when (as the apostle Paul beautifully

\* Mrs. Elizabeth Ford, who died May 31, 1781. See a Sermon preached upon that occasion by her husband, Mr. William Ford.

expresses it) this corruptible shall put on incorruption, and this mortal shall put on immortality.

What remains is, that we endeavour to profit by the death of our dear Friend and Brother. — You have heard, that by the Grace of God he lived well, and died well : O then let us endeavour, in a dependence on that Grace, to live to the Lord, and to die to the Lord, as he did.

Believe it, my dear hearers, that there is a reality and excellency in Religion. I confess there are too many pretenders to it, who have it not, and some of whom are a disgrace to it : yet there are some, I hope many religious persons in this sinful world, who truly fear God, put their trust in the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation, and sincerely love him, and whose lives testify that they are devoted to God, that they fervently love their fellow-men and fellow-Christians, and that their conversation is in Heaven. These are the excellent of the earth, and their *holy lives* and *happy deaths* are a plain proof that there is a reality, an importance, an excellency in religion. Is not that excellent, which makes men like the most holy and blessed God, lovers and imitators of him ? Is not that excellent, which makes them faithful and just, sober and temperate, benevolent and useful ; which makes them thankful for their mercies, patient in affliction, and resigned to the will of Heaven ; which arms them against the fear of death, and gives them confidence towards God,

God, when entering into Eternity, and going to his dread tribunal ?

Another thing I would urge upon you, is to think of the necessity and importance of being prepared for death and eternity. This is the one thing needful, the most necessary and important concern in the world. How *short* and *uncertain* is *life* ! So *short*, that it is but a vapour that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away. So *uncertain*, that we cannot boast of to-morrow, for we know not what a day may bring forth. And *how awful* is *death*, if persons are not prepared ! If they live and die in their sins, unpardoned, un sanctified, alienated from the life of God, the first death is only an introduction to the second, which is eternal death and misery.

In the last place ; I would beseech you not to rest in any thing short of Christ, of union and communion with him. Don't rest in any name, or any profession of religion, but be concerned to have an interest in Jesus by faith ; to have your souls united to him, that you may be living branches in the true vine, and may bring forth fruit unto God. Without Christ we are spiritually dead ; may have a name to live, but are dead ; for as the scripture says, " He that hath the Son hath life, but he that hath not the Son of God hath not life." Jesus Christ is the foundation of all our hope and comfort towards God, and he is the fountain of spiritual life to our  
souls,



souls ; therefore we must have him for our Saviour and our God, our righteousness and life, else we are dead in trespasses and sins ; and if we live and die without him, eternal death will be our portion. But if Christ be our life, then death will be our gain, our unspeakable and everlasting gain. It will release us from a state of darkness, imperfection, temptation, and sorrow ; and introduce us into a state of perfect light, purity and happiness, in the blissful presence of God. And though at present, Death seems to triumph over the bodies of the faithful in Christ, his triumph will be but short, for ere long shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in Victory.

A word or two now to the mourning Relatives and Friends, and I have done.—Truly you have lost a valuable Relation and Friend ; but I wish you may be quickened by his death to serious diligence in preparing for your own. I entreat you to consider what he was, how he lived, and how he died ; consider also what he now is, and where he now is ; that he is a Saint in glory, freed from all imperfection, and compleatly happy.—May divine Grace help you to follow him as he followed Christ, and then you will in God's time have a joyful meeting with him, never to part more.



F I S.



